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FAR EAST

1. Quemoy islands area quiet as of 6 September:

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As of 1200 (Washington time) on 6 September, the situation was quiet in the Quemoy islands area.

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Intermittent shelling of the islands by Communist artillery to the north and west had continued on 4 and 5 September. Movements of trucks and other vehicles were reported near Communist-held Amoy, but no unusual troop activity had been observed.

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Nationalist aircraft have carried out a number of reconnaissance, bombing and strafing missions. Nationalist naval strength in the Quemoy area has been increased, by the arrival of three destroyers, and preparations have been made for possible reinforcement of the Nationalist garrison on the Quemoys. The garrison has doubled the guards in beach positions and has continued to prepare against possible Communist landings. Nationalist artillery has fired on Communist gun positions and has shelled Amoy.

The Nationalist Ministry of National Defense estimates the most favorable period for a Chinese Communist invasion of the Quemoys to be 12 to 22 September. This estimate is based primarily on data concerning tides.

Comment: The Communist bombardment of the Quemoys on 3 September seemed to be aimed at testing American intentions as to defense of the major Nationalist-held offshore islands. An early Communist attempt to invade the Quemoys, in the face of strong American naval and air forces in Formosan waters, now appears doubtful.

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2. Chinese Communist flights over Formosa seem probing operation:

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Taipei was blacked out in the early morning of 6 September after radar had picked up an unidentified plane at 18,000 feet shortly past midnight. Two hours later four unidentified planes were reported, and flares were reported near a Taipei airfield.

Comment: The Chinese Communists were presumably attempting in these flights to test the temper of the populace, in the light of Communist threats to "liberate" Formosa. The dropping of flares suggests a photo-reconnaissance mission. The Communists may also have wished to determine whether the Nationalists have any night-fighters available.

The Chinese Communists have the capability of launching day or night air attacks on Formosa. There is an increasing possibility of raids on Formosan bases, particularly those from which the Chinese Nationalists fly air support for their offshore island positions.

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